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Vocal Utopias: Glossolalias

Glossolalia: *a class of related deviant linguistic behaviors characterized by discourse that is fluid and mobile, divisible into phonemic units, and entirely or almost entirely constituted by neologisms.*[1]

Among French writers glossolalia *(or* speaking in tongues*) is considered the tendency to create new languages that become richer and more stable over time. To a great extent, the formation of such languages is understood to involve clear consciousness and deliberate will (for example, Cénac or Teulié). By contrast and deviating less from tradition, among German writers, the various verbal forms of glossolalia are considered only the involuntary eruption of intense affective processes with a weakening in the clarity of what is conscious.*[2]

O kwena kana maSe kana maSina ina kwena Sanana kanana o kwina kama naSina naSena ina kwena Simine nana o kwena kana maSina ina swina kanama naSina o kwina kama naja ina kwina nanaSa o kwina kana maja Sana ina kwena ma o kwina mo ina mina ina kwina o na mo.[3]

Fictions of Speech
[*Fictions du dire*]

THE EXPERTS REPEAT IT OVER AND OVER: glossolalia resembles a language but is not one. It seems like a language but lacks its structure.[4] It is nothing more than a "facade."[5] In each case, "the discourse of glossolalia can be distinguished from an unfamiliar language."[6] Glossolalia is a *trompe-l'oreille*, just like a *trompe-l'oeil*, a semblance of language that can be fabricated when one knows its phonetic rules. "It speaks for the sake of speaking" [*il parle pour ne rien dire*]: so as not to be tricked by words, to slip the snares of meaning, to be a pure *fable* (Latin: *fari*, to speak) and to return to the priority of a first *telling* [*un premier dire*]. In any case, whether glossolalia appears in a form that is infantile ("eenie meenie minie moe"), "pathological" (neologisms, alliterations, and so on), literary (Dadaist, for example), or religious ("gift of tongues," "ecstatic utterances," and so on), this is what one first confronts: a fiction of discourse orchestrates the act of saying [*l'acte de dire*] but expresses nothing. Glossolalia is thus an art of speech [*un art de dire*] within the bounds of an illusion.[7]

Is this so exceptional a phenomenon? A glossolalia already pushes up through the cracks of ordinary conversation: bodily noises, quotations of delinquent sounds, and fragments of others' voices punctuate the order of sentences with breaks and surprises. Addresses from whom and to whom? A scattered and sec-

ondary vocalization traverses discursive expression, splicing or dubbing it. The major voice, while claiming to be the messenger of meaning, appears caught up in a doubling that compromises it. And only in those functions in which it most distances itself from dialogue does it liberate itself from its disquieting twin. Political, scholarly, and religious discourses, for example, all progressively close themselves off to that which emerges where voice ruptures or interrupts a series of propositions, to that which is born where the other is present. A fragility disappears from discourse. With the erasure of occasional stammers, hesitations, and vocal tics, or lapses and drifting sounds, the interlocutor is removed to a distance, transformed into audience.

By contrast, conversation reopens the surface of discourse to these *noises of otherness*. As it approaches its addressee, speech becomes fragile. Different voices disrupt the organizing system of meaning. Weeds between the paving stones. For a moment, like voodoo "loa," voices possess discourse. They "ride" it.[8] Here and there, they spirit it away from me, without my knowing what they are or whence they come. What other thing within me gives rise to them, to what do they answer? This fragmentary "possession" troubles, breaks, or suspends the autonomy of the speaker. The secondary noises that populate ordinary conversations represent the tattoo of the vocal and the interlocutory on the body of discourse.[9] They mark the workings of language when it is spoken. This vocal vegetation flourishes in interviews as well, and transcriptions that clear it from sentences erase traces that point to a statute of speech—to something essential. From the clamor of voices [*sabbat de voix*] overrunning and breaking up the field of statements comes a mumble that escapes the control of speakers and that violates the supposed division between speaking individuals. It fills the space between speakers with the plural and prolix act of communication and creates, mezza voce, an opera of enunciation on the stage of verbal exchange.

Glossolalia would be the phenomenon that *isolates* this opera and *authorizes it*. It organizes a space where the possibility of speaking is deployed for itself. By speaking in tongues instead of in words, a glossolalist explains, "I can concentrate on *communication* itself rather than on the *mode* of communication."[10] The fiction of language sets the stage on which a simulation of speech is produced.[11] It is situated beyond the reach of truth or of error, outside the walls of any language. It no longer articulates semantic units (or else not yet). An abjection of meaning is prerequisite to this *vocal utopia* of speaking. But this imitation, foreign to all possible language, gives voice to something that concerns the possibility of any particular language being spoken. The semblance of meaningful statements [*énoncés*] sets the stage on which the act of enunciation [*l'énonciation*] is auditioned for veri-similitude.[12] Like a simulation of lunar landing, here a simulacrum of language allows speakers to play out at a distance the real passage from muteness (*can not say*) to speech (*can say*). Circumscribed and authorized like a laboratory procedure, the glossolalic fiction permits the experience of this passage.

Two Species

Under the sign of both a "must say" [an *obligation* to say] and a *belief in the spoken word* [*la parole*], the glossolalic fiction even compels this passage.[13] To this end, it deploys around speech the spectrum of its modalities: *can, must*, and *know how to / believe in* [*pouvoir, devoir*, and *savoir/croire*]. Glossolalia leans on a need to speak and puts pressure on it before allowing it a way out. It exists only where a value, an obligation, or a constraint (cultural, religious, psychological) is attached to speech, where one must say, where "that" must speak.[14] Aureate orality or aurality.[15] The act matters more here than the content. It has meaning at the moment when the signification of statements comes undone. Like a cry or a confession, glossolalia presents itself as an imperative or a need. Tearing through the patience and the ritualized practice of silence, incited by the ludic, religious, medical, or literary circle that authorizes it, a *must say* claims to pass from the *can not say* to the *can say*. Legitimate and necessary transgression of the order that makes one hold one's tongue or control one's voice when uttering sentences, a *must say* demands this passage.

But this transition supposes equally that somewhere there is a reservoir from which some "voice" might pour forth. An expectation focuses on this still-distant Other—this speaking, indecipherable oracle, vocal flow that muteness dams. A *belief* awaits the waters of a first orality that could wash through the walls of our languages. Would that there were a Word! Fable itself. It would suffice that our mouths open, emptied of words, that "torrents" of passing voices be allowed to take over. But these rivers, where are they? Whence do they come? Believing in them is not knowing. The very term *spirit*, which for so many traditions designates that act and the actor of speech, underlines the nonplace of "that which speaks." In the words of John of the Cross (after and before many others), the *spirit* is *el que habla*, the one that speaks.[16] The belief that founds the expectation of a coming *speech* creates the *atopia* in which this speech is produced, a scene that is reflected and assured in the glossolalic *utopia* (*utopia* because it is not one among other actual languages, neither this one nor that one, but a linguistic neutral).[17] What is needed in order to pose a question that is universal (what is it to "say" without saying something?) and by definition lacks its own place is an illusion that escapes localization. The speech postulated by belief can only reside in a *spiritual fiction*, at once scientific simulation and poetic production. What utopia is to social space, glossolalia is to oral communication; it encloses in a linguistic simulacrum all that is not language and comes from the speaking voice.

One form of this process can be schematized as follows: glossolalia governs a transition from a *can not say* $\{\bar{c}(S)\}$ to a *can say* $\{c(S)\}$ by way of a *can say nothing* $\{c(\bar{S})\}$, itself supported by a *must say* $\{m(S)\}$ and a *believe in saying* $\{b(S)\}$, as if the obligation and the belief compensated for the absence of meaningful statements and authorized the utopic space offered to voices:

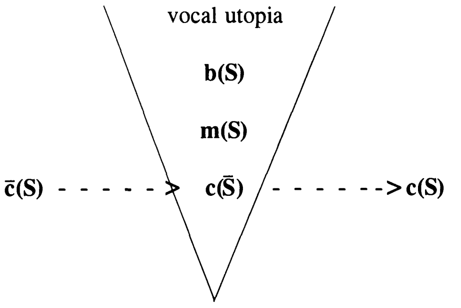


FIGURE 1.

A second glossolalia moves in the opposite direction. It traces the same path in reverse. It deconstructs the articulate speech on which it is founded by playing with phonemes and/or deriding the spoken word. Thus Christian Morgenstern or Hugo Ball in Germany or Raoul Duguet or Claude Gauvreau in Quebec.[18] Or even this poem from Pastor Paul:

> Schua ea, Schua ea
> O tschi biro tira pea
> akki lungo ta ri fungo
> u li bara ti ra tungo
> latschi bungo ti tu ta[19]

Literary, ludic, or infantile, and on occasion pathological, this form of glossolalia crosses through the boundary of statements to test the potentialities of the vocal palette, to fill a space of enunciation with polyphonic chatter before falling off into silence. The space of this glossolalia is no less utopian and circumscribed than that of figure 1, but its foundation is an absence of obligation (a permission to fool language) rather than an obligation (to say), and an incredulity (a lucidity about the non-sense of meaning) rather than a belief (in the spoken word).[20] The formula of this inverse process would thus be:

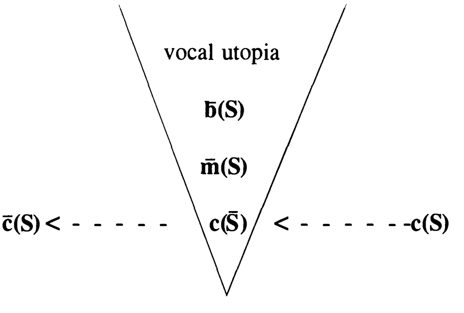


FIGURE 2.

While in the first form of glossolalia speech plays a role akin to that of *tears* (there is a strong analogy between the "gift of tongues" and the "gift of tears") and in the second form of glossolalia, one more akin to that of *laughter* ("glossolalia comes to me like a laugh," said an English glossolalist who believed neither in spirits nor in the Holy Spirit), by means of a semblance of language, both forms put into question the relationship between saying and the modalities: *can, must* (obligation or permission), and *know how to* (or *believe in*). The two forms of glossolalia are equally fictions of speech.

Furthermore, this specific phenomenon has universal ambition. In excluding all actual languages, it is the *saying* of each language or that without which no language is spoken. Glossolalia has metalinguistic value but in relation to the act of enunciation. It isolates speech from all that one says.[21] In this theoretical vocal space, speech can say itself. The problem of the beginning and end is thus central here. How does one start to speak? The term *glossolalia* signifies to babble, to jibber-jabber, or to stutter (Greek: *lalein*) in the tongue (Greek: *glossè*). So it is no surprise to find glossolalic traces or moments in the speech of children just as in innumerable literary texts (see Rabelais, Cyrano de Bergerac, and so on) that concern the nature, conditions, and beginnings of the Word [*la Parole*]. But bound to the question of the beginnings of the spoken word [*la parole*] is the question of its *lapsus* or its end. How does speaking come undone? The passion of the fall redoubles the passion of the birth. Each, moreover, can be the very site of the other, and accordingly the two figures frequently mix. Every glossolalia combines something prelinguistic, related to a silent origin or to the "attack" of the spoken word, and something postlinguistic, made from the excesses, the overflows, and the wastes of language.[22] The artifact through which speech plays itself out is pieced together in these fictions, just as in myth, from the before and the after of speech.

The Illusion of Meaning
[*La Tromperie du sens*]

A strange fact: this fiction of language does not cease to be taken for a language and treated as such. It is ceaselessly obliged "to mean" something ["*vouloir dire*"]. It excites an unwearying impulse to decrypt and to decipher that always supposes a meaningful organization behind the sequence of sounds. The history of glossolalia is made up almost entirely of interpretations that aim to make it speak in sentences and that claim to restore this vocal delinquency to an order of signifieds. In our era in the West, from the interpretation of the glossolalia of the Pentecost given in *Acts of the Apostles* ("pious men of all nations" understood "in their own languages") down to Ferdinand de Saussure or to psychoanalysis, the serious and jubilant play of speech always receives a rather clever hermeneutic response that reduces the "want to say" [*vouloir dire*] to a "want to say something" [*vouloir dire quelque chose*].[23]

The history of this equivocation goes back to relations that, since antiquity, Reason has maintained with Fable while usurping its place. The scholarly hermeneutic effects a substitution of bodies: in the very space established by Fable, it replaces the spoken story with the content of its own analysis. Western modernity developed this sleight of hand in all of its forms of ethnological, psychiatric, and pedagogical exegesis as if it were necessary to write in the place where "that" speaks. Savage voices and voices of the people, mad voices and infantile voices define the places where it becomes possible and necessary to write. Voices furnish the hermeneutic with its condition of production, that is, with the sites it occupies where it converts them to text.[24] In face of the glossolalic chain, the hermeneutic work mobilizes its scientific apparatus. But in so doing, it unveils the belief that animates it. Whereas glossolalia postulates that somewhere there is speech, interpretation supposes that *somewhere there must be meaning*. Interpretation searches for meaning, and it finds it because it expects it to be there, because interpretation relies on the conviction that especially where meaning appears to be absent, it is hidden someplace, present "all the same." Thus, the hermeneutic pursues its object most obstinately in those non-sense places where it postulates "secret languages." It focuses upon that which it takes as a challenge to meaning. And finally, because it believes in meaning, it is trapped into a semblance of language.

The functioning of this equivocation, therefore, teaches us something about the glossolalic voice. In this regard, it would be tempting to study the exegesis in the first Christian texts that mention cases of glossolalia, an exegesis both tenacious and capable of maintaining a revelation of meaning, an exegesis that has flourished especially since the pentecostal and charismatic movements gave new currency to the "gift of tongues."[25] But two more recent cases, a linguistic analysis by Saussure and a psychoanalytic study by Oskar Pfister, will suffice to show how the non-sense of glossolalic discourse sets a trap for interpretation and drives it to delirium.

Pfister: The Equivocation of Communication

Oskar Pfister, whose scientific and personal fidelity to Sigmund Freud is demonstrated by a nearly thirty-year correspondence (1909–38), was very much interested in glossolalia.[26] He devoted two studies to this topic that were the subject of epistolary exchanges with Freud and with Carl Jung.[27] The "psychoanalytic method" exhibited in his second study consists in transcribing fragments of glossolalic discourse, cut up into phonetic units—*Esin gut efflorien meinogast schinohaz*, and so on—and then, by association, probing for the linguistic terms signified by each piece. This detour through the association of ideas serves as a substitute for etymology (and operates in a way similar to it). It permits the rediscovery of sig-

nification by means of a return to infancy: in the beginning was the Meaning. For Pfister, glossolalia is a regression to an infantile state. By referring back to the affective experiences of the child, he transforms the non-sense vocalization into a coherent discourse.

Pfister establishes the tone from the very start: "*Esin* signifies 'a meaning' (*ein Sinn*)." A brilliant attack: from the first "word," interpretation lays down its axiom. The rest comes by way of routes circling through German and English (the glossolalic fragment, "*Si wo*" means "*See where you are!*"—see [English], *wo* [German]) and by way of frequent references to proper names pulled from the most heterogeneous traditions (*Efflorien* comes from *Florence*). A key to the exegesis appears at the fourth "word" of the glossolalic series, *Meinogast*, which would signify "my (*mein*) Oskar": the interpreter (Oskar Pfister) is inscribed within the discourse, which itself declares that it cannot be separated from its "dear friend." No, I will neither be taken from you nor from meaning, says the vocal narration; seek and ye shall find.[28] In fact, Pfister discovers this hidden "friend," meaning, that tells of the anxieties of being a pastor (Pfister himself was a Swiss pastor) through the mouth of a "twenty-four-year-old religious fanatic." The analytic operation, treating these broken fragments of discourse by splicing them one after another into a series, restores each of them to sameness and to meaning: that "signifies," this "means," that "refers to," and so on. The exegete can "assume the right to formulate meaning" for a term and to give the deciphered *written translation* of the voice, assimilated to a "secret speech."[29]

What spoils does the victory of interpretation bring? "The pious," writes Freud, "are not generally so generous . . . in their ravings."[30] Nor are the scholars. The hermeneutic operation implies a revenue. The appearance of meaning, extracted like a confession from the fragmented (tortured?) voice, allows two *general* characteristics of all language to be safeguarded: (1) that language organizes some *meaning*, and (2) that it articulates some *real*. Pfister achieves this by converting apparently "fanatical" discourse into a string of quotations connected to narratives about the childhood of the speaker (each phonetic unit becoming a tiny bit of an absent narrative), then into an ensemble of "complexes" going back to these first years. Finally, it is the system of complexes (that is, a discourse of the real) that permits a construction of meaning from the quotations. The fiction produced by this double passage from the vocal to the narrative and from the narrative to the structural (a passage that responds to the program that Freud set for his friend) guarantees the possibility of understanding [*entendre*] the speaking body as language.[31] Here exegesis produces its own axioms. It duplicates itself in the semblance that it fabricates.

Employing the same word that he would use to define *Moses and Monotheism* ("a historical novel"), Freud calls Pfister's *Glossolalieversuch* a "novel" (*Roman* [German]), even a "terribly amusing" one: a detective novel designed to reveal, through a series of twists and turns, real and coherent agents (the complexes) behind the

non-sense voices that, as in the traditional ethnography of the voodoo *loa*, it understands to be only "masks."[32] By wiles, reason struggles against these voices, attempting to make them blend into the backdrops set up by the "work" behind the scenes. But this space offstage is itself a theater, a sort of scientific hallucination. The system of interpretation is given as a performance of the values that it privileges—some *meaning*, a *real*, the *work*—which take the place of the "masks" (gods, principles, or values) that the glossolalic opera authorizes—non-sense (an excess), *fiction* (an atopia), and pleasure (a game). Pfister is telling himself his own story when his exegesis makes the "secret speech" of his "young fanatic" say: "You possess the necessary religious, moral, and intellectual qualifications to be able, with God's help, to become a minister in spite of persecution and misfortune."[33] In spite of all this, you can become the apostle of a meaning, of a real and a productive asceticism. This hermeneutic "moral" is drawn from its opposite, the fable, and it converts it: the voice can become the "minister" of meaning.

But explanation, which is foreign to glossolalic speech, is at the same time necessary to it. It is foreign because, in abstaining from all actual language, glossolalic speech abandons to commentary all control of meaning: it allows the hermeneutic work to drive itself to a delirium of repeating willy-nilly the presuppositions of the interpretation. By contrast, if speech is to be isolated as enunciative "singing," meaning must be posited *elsewhere*, outside the scene of speech. This semblance of language presupposes the existence of positive languages, and it envisions the possibility of speaking them. It already implies the exteriority of a commentary, foreignness necessary to its own autonomization. In other words, a *reciprocity* links glossolalia and interpretation, but *in the mode of equivocation*. Neither functions without the other. Needing the referent of interpretation to exile itself from meaning, glossolalia misleads interpretation all the more. Explanation, for its part, uses glossolalia to confirm its own principles. The illusion is the motor of the necessary relationship between these two figures; each generates itself from the other, which it transforms into a simulacrum of its own design—language taking on the appearance of the "all the same" of an act of enunciation, and speech providing material to a fiction that, "despite everything," affirms meaning.[34]

This problematic of quid pro quo (a mix-up: one in the place of the other) and of illusion (one is the semblance of the other) characterizes the relation (here necessary) between two positions of language. This problematic concerns the function of enunciation and not the organization of statements: it develops from the moment that the issue is communication and not its content, therefore, saying and hearing, or speaking, being toward and for others.[35] This question, posed by glossolalia, generates its hermeneutic reciprocal and it puts into relief the illusion of the relation.[36] It leads us to wonder whether the function of the content is not to hide the illusion of communication, and whether, reciprocally, the perception of an illusion camouflaged by the organization of meaning is not at the origin of

the vocal utopia that, in destroying the possibility of articulating meaning, attempts to restore a way of talking [*un parler*].[37]

Saussure: A Way of Talking Taken for a Language

No less typical [than Pfister's treatment of glossolalia] is the analysis that Saussure made between 1895 and 1898 of the discourse produced by a young medium and glossolalist known as Mlle. Hélène Smith, the pseudonym given by the Genevan psychologist Théodore Flournoy, indefatigable observer of her "case."[38] [In her seances,] the young Mlle. Smith spoke not only "Martian" but also a language that appeared to be Sanskrit (which she did not know). To judge what he called "Sanskritoid," Flournoy called upon some specialists, among others Ferdinand de Saussure, "professor of Sanskrit," whose numerous letters Flournoy cites and whom he depicts transcribing the sounds, "up close to Hélène who sang seated upon the ground." A scientific areopagus surrounds the voice. While noting the "grammatical nullity" of Hélène's Sanskrit, Saussure produces the following diagnosis: (1) this speech "resembles" Sanskrit, it "recalls" some words from it, and it includes meaningful "fragments"; (2) the rest, while unintelligible, "never has an anti-Sanskrit quality," which is to say, does not present "groups materially contrary to or in opposition to the form of Sanskrit words"; (3) in particular, it is characterized by a greater frequency of the vowel *a*[39] and by the absence of the consonant *f*, as in Sanskrit.[40] Apart from this, he hypothesizes that underneath Smith's discourse, there is a syntactic "weave" of French words, that the medium searches for "exotic" sounds from diverse sources (English, German, and so on) to substitute for already-constituted semantic units. The ["Sanskritoid"] ensemble would thus obey one essential rule: "it is only and above all necessary that it does not seem French."[41]

In omitting the *f*, Hélène was obeying a rule: "The word 'French,'" as Victor Henry notes, "begins with an *f*; for this reason the *f* must appear to her to be the 'French' letter *par excellence*, and thus she avoids it as much as possible." As Tzvetan Todorov puts it, a symbolic system (*f* symbolizes French) reorganizes the spoken language.[42] By a series of coincidences (frequency of *a*, disappearance of *f*, and so on), Hélène's speech is *heard* as Sanskrit, which undoubtedly leads the speaker to develop the resemblance as far as she can. But this supposed identity, which is the result of a listening that created the mobilization of scholarship (and its lure), should not make us forget the fundamental will to an *other* speech. The illusion is maintained in the equivocation between a way of talking that would like to be other for speech (not-French) and its reception, which identifies it with a positivity, foreign but knowable (Sanskrit). Here, too, the illusion concerns not the content of communication but the process: a way of talking taken for a language.

Whence, in that case, the necessity of not sounding French, the *trompe l'oreille* that induces the scholarly listeners to hear Sanskrit (or Sanskritoid)? The sincerity of Mlle. Smith is not in question. Her audience agrees in testifying to her honesty. Undoubtedly, she must have begun to speak "Sanskrit" and to develop its soundscapes because her listeners were expecting it and heard it there, somewhat in the manner of a child whose parents, *by their listening* and by their cutting apart "first words" of the language it is beginning to speak, influence the child's simulation of that language. Rather than entering a language, Mlle. Smith exited one (French). But this "exit" [*sortie*] might also have been an apprenticeship in Sanskrit if the areopagus of examiners had considered responding to her rather than observing her and had sought a communication (a talking) rather than the existence of a knowledge (a language). Her "babble," as Saussure called it, never aimed at a language but always at something like the institution of a way of talking.

The Vocal Institution

Glossolalia concerns a particular form of can say: its foundation. It establishes that which permits saying to take place. The scene is immediately physical. As a glossolalist puts it: it is "an event in my throat," and often, in the beginning, without phonation, a glosso-labial movement, "a warmth in my tongue and lips," and so on. A glottal movement inaugurates a talking. Little by little, rough phonations come, then more structured articulation. By way of apprenticeship, the beginning is transformed progressively into a "glosso-poesis."[43] The "vocal miracle" narrativizes itself. It seems that the threshold between muteness and speaking can be extended and organized, can be reconstituted like a "no man's land," a space of vocal manipulations and jubilations, already free from silence but not yet subject to a particular language.

Games on the frontier. Intoxications of beginning. Technically, these transformations are analogous to the work of inversion, to the "attack" of a piece of vocal or instrumental music, to its stretching and its variation. They compare more closely still to the beginning that came to Dante in a line of verse, as he sat one day on the bank of a clear stream: "My tongue spoke, moved almost of its own accord. . . . With great delight, I tucked these words away in my memory, thinking of using them as an opening to my poem. Then after . . . musing for several days, I began to write a *canzone* using this beginning."[44] For the glossolalist, though, the starting point that calls forth the song is not even a line: it is only an "air" of beginning.

What is at stake here, in this place where sentences are not yet produced, is the foundation of a theater of action that would permit them. Long ago in ancient Rome, it was the role of the *fetiales* priests to open a legitimate space (*fas*) for

martial, military, or commercial actions to be attempted outside of the City. Their ritual procession from the center of the city to the exterior did not assure the success of these actions, but it authorized their performance: by means of a *repetitio rerum* that consisted of repeating the narratives of origins in a new space, as at a dress rehearsal, the theater of future activities was "opened" to the outside.[45] In the same way, glossolalia "rehearses" [*répète*] infantile phonations, that is, beginnings of speech, but in view of establishing a stage for linguistic operations to come.[46]

The first vocal narrations occur in this space: the vowels *a* and *i* predominate, then *ū*, the labials and the dentals, then the velars. Composed of phonemes primitive to many languages, these songs create by returning to the originary authorization of a new beginning, as if to begin to speak it were necessary each time to get back to this *archè*, to this principle of speaking that is the first Fable. This is a place of an ease and a play, not yet subject to the technical and tactical constraints that communication imposes upon linguistic articulation, a place of a jubilant indeterminacy, "with great delight . . . tucked away."

This moment of overture corresponds to what the poet marks (already within the space of the poem but not yet past its threshold) when he says: "Come, oh Muse." The invocation, an inaugural sacrifice on the verbal stone of a proper name, calls up an "inspiriting" Voice that speaks and makes speak, instituting the space of a language.[47] The Muse, a near double of the Holy Spirit, enables the passage from one space to another. She founds the possibility of the poem: one must first be possessed by her in order to be brought into song. For "charismatics," who call their glossolalia a "song," there is only one way to prepare: "to abandon oneself," "to let go," to offer oneself "like a child" to that which speaks. From the beginning, for the infant, it is the voice that opens (and circumscribes) a sphere of communication preparatory to the spoken word. Invoked here as the Holy Spirit, it defines the function of glossolalia, that is, to *institute a space of enunciation*.

The social and/or psychological circumstances that characterize the periodic recurrence of glossolalia are tied to this instituting function. These apparitions depend on a question that has a history if not a historiography: the foundation of the spoken word. Normally, in a society, institutions found, guarantee, and distribute the space of speech. They owe this role not to the capital of meaning that they preserve (this is only what they make believe) but to their capacity to organize a checkerboard of positions that at once authorizes and limits verbal circulation, divides and controls it.[48] Family, profession, and public function each define *topics of illocutory acts*, that is to say, the network of spaces where speech is permitted (founded) but in a system of conventions that fixes its conditions and its pertinence: you can speak here but not there; you can say that here, but not under such and such circumstances, and nowhere else; and so on. Innumerable rituals and gestures, too, mark each act of beginning to speak. Treated as a com-

plex and stratified spatial distribution, the foundation of speech thus disperses questions about it and even masks it behind the careful play of practice and custom.

Non-Sense and Repetition
[L'Insensé et la répétition]

Two curious traits stand out from this intricate operation: they are emphasized in the "extraordinary" phenomena (glossolalia, in particular) that fill the gap left when the regular institution of speech fails or when it loses its pertinence (in poetry, for example). In ordinary usage, what authorizes the act of speaking is very often of the order of *non-sense* and of *repetition*. On the one hand, as Roman Jakobson noted (in a study devoted to glossolalia), the incomprehensible "words" passed down through tradition that "exceed your reason" are precisely what make one speak.[49] The spoken word seems constantly reborn from these "old words" that are "wise words" because they *do not have meaning* and because, like the institution of speech, they make manifest the blind origin (the "fable") from which all meaningful discourse emerges. From the range of discourse between ordinary conversation and the psychoanalytic session, a thousand examples could be drawn to demonstrate this relationship between articulate speech and the meaningless "voices" that made it possible.

On the other hand, speech also springs from *repetition*, from common sayings, proverbs, and from all of the daily equivalents of nursery rhymes (wrongly thought to be the exclusive province of children): the already-said authorizes new words, just as at one time the *repetitio rerum* of the *fetiales* priests made possible ventures beyond the "received" terrain. All conversation is punctuated by "beginnings," that is, places where the experience of being *infans*, of being speechless, is reiterated; through verbal formulas, rhyming proverbs, or even more simply, through glottal noises, unintelligible sounds, quoted voices, and so forth, all conversation returns to the process that "permits" us to pass back into speech. These tics are the repetitions that raise speech up [*relever*] from its origin in sound.[50] Dispersed as they are, they nonetheless refer back to the vocal institution of speaking.

Both an autonomy and an instability in the voice can already be located in relation to the articulation of meaning. The act of speaking, fragile to circumstance, subject to the difficulty of beginning and to the peril of failure, introduces schism and dissent into the harmony (supposed by language) between sound and sense. Although language has neither beginning nor end, speaking gives to the voice, to its troubles, to its jubilations the pathos of time—that is to say, the accidents of beginnings, returns to originary non-sense, failures, and defections. Voice is the dramatic or comic story of these deaths and births, the story that

speaking must play out and outplay, although language, which eliminates them, leaves it ill-prepared to do so.

Why does this game, which is normally diffused in the daily exercise of speech, become focused in vocal utopias at certain historical, sociocultural, or psychological moments? How, for example, does the "vocal institution" fold in upon itself in the form of glossolalia? Certain typical features distinguish these moments: the devaluation of institutions of the word (ecclesiastical or social), the deterioration of customs and practices, the debasement of linguistic conventions, and so on. These social phenomena have their psychological equivalents—for which glossolalia offers to fill in. Glossolalia takes charge vocally. This "art of nonsense" is thus the art of beginning or of rebeginning to speak by *saying*.[51]

The ideologies that surround glossolalia orchestrate this taking charge of speech. They make it a question of *primitive language* (the origin) before Babel or of whatever stands in for it; of *unity* that overcomes the scissions among languages or among speakers (a zero-degree, a "neutral," or a divine of speech); of *inspiration*, which would be the very being-there of the originary and which would triumph over the uncertainty of the beginning; of *the language of angels* in which the transparency of content leads to privileging the "want to say" [*vouloir dire*] and the listening that characterize a pure act of speaking;[52] of *infantile* babble above all, the transition (ever to be performed anew) from muteness to language, an interval of chance and creation, the production of enunciative space.

Ebrietas spiritualis: An Opera

Thus, before glossolalia is reduced to no more than an "illustration" of doctrines written in books and kept captive by scholars [*clercs*], before this institutional recuperation and exploitation, glossolalia appears in the form of an *originary joy*. In the Middle Ages, it was called *ebrietas spiritualis* or inebriation of the spirit, the jubilation of beginning to speak: "Let . . . fullness of joy without measure surpass the limits of syllables," says Saint Augustine.[53]

As an invention of vocal space, glossolalia in fact multiplies the possibilities of speech. No determination of meaning constrains or restrains it. The decomposition of syllables and the combination of elementary sounds in games of alliteration create an *indefinite* space outside of the jurisdiction of a language. This vast space, artificial and entrancing, this virgin forest of the voice, is supposed to have "meaning" as a whole, as a totality, but one can circulate freely within it without encountering the limits that condition any articulation of meaning. Within this privileged space, within the ephemeral construction of this scene, the issue is no longer that of statements but of an opera composed only of the vocal modalizations that a statement might undergo. On the stage of a linguistic semblance, an enactment of language is replaced by a *vocalization of the subject*.[54]

It soon disappears, this "parterre of colored vowels," garden of rich sounds drifting and playing down many paths [*voies*].[55] Thus perhaps returns still stricter than before the law of linguistic and semantic order that the voice had fled for autonomous spaces. "Exits" allowed by the dichotomy of voice and language would be only ephemeral in relation to a reinforced system. But this brings up a different social and political aspect of glossolalia.

—Translated by Daniel Rosenberg

Notes

"Vocal Utopias: Glossolalias" was originally published as "Utopies vocales: Glossolalies," *Traverses* 20 (1980): 26–37. This translation is the work of many hands. I would particularly like to thank Luce Giard, without whose patient and careful editing this work could never have been completed. Thanks also to Michael Smith, Carla Hesse, Stephen Greenblatt, Randolph Starn, Martin Jay, Frédérique Pressmann, and Theresa Tensuan.

1. André Roch-Lecours, "La Glossolalie dans l'aphasie de Wernicke, dans la shizophasie, et dans les états de possession" (conference paper delivered at Urbino, 11 July 1978). [Unless otherwise noted, translations of all works cited are my own. Trans.]
2. Jean Bobon, *Introduction historique à l'étude des néologismes et des glossolalies en psychopathologie* (Liège, 1952), 62. The works of Jean Bobon follow upon a remarkable series of studies of language "pathology" at the end of the nineteenth century and at the beginning of the twentieth. Notable for the clinical description of the avatars of language (which fascinated enlightened science), these studies are unparalleled today. Above all, I would point to the following: Adolf Kussmaul, *Les Troubles de la parole*, trans. A. Rueff (Baillière, France, 1884); Emile Lombard, "Essai d'une classification des phénomènes de glossolalie," *Archives de psychologie* 7, no. 1 (1908): 1–51; Alphonse Maeder, "La Langue d'un aliéné: Analyse d'un cas de glossolalie" *L'Encéphale* (1910): 208–16; Pierre Quercy, "Langage et poésie d'un aliéné," *L'Encéphale* (1920): 207–12; Michel Cénac, *De certains langages créés par des aliénés: Contribution à l'étude des "glossolalies"* (Paris, 1925); C. Pfersdorff's series of studies in *Travaux de la clinique psychiatrique de la Faculté de Médecine de Strasbourg* (Strasbourg, 1927–1936), 5: 1–157, 7: 241–362, 10: 260–366, 11: 43–182; Guilhem Teulié, "Une forme de glossolalie: Glossolalie par suppression littérale," *Annales médico-psychologiques* 96, no. 2 (1938): 31–51. This corpus will be the subject of a later work. [According to Luce Giard, this work was never completed. Certeau did exert an important influence upon other students of glossolalia. See Jean-Jacques Courtine, "Pour introduire aux glossolalies: Un hommage à Michel de Certeau," introduction to issue 91 (September 1988) of the journal *Langages* devoted to glossolalia. *Trans.*]
3. Glossolalia of a Pentecostal charismatic, transcription by Roch-Lecours, "La glossolalie dans l'aphasie." (The *S* is used here in conformity with the conventional symbols of phonetic transcription.)
4. [*Elle en a l'air* . . . Here Certeau plays on the musical sense of an "air" as he does again later in this essay. He discusses the analogy between music and mystic speech in Michel de Certeau, "The Fiction of the Soul, Foundation of *The Interior Castle* (Teresa of Avila)," in *The Mystic Fable*, trans. Michael B. Smith (Chicago, 1992), 1:188–190. See also

Michel de Certeau, "Mystic Speech," in *Heterologies: Discourse on the Other*, trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis, 1986), 96–100. See also the discussion of the use of the term *air* on page 38. *Trans.*]

5. William J. Samarin, *Tongues of Men and Angels* (New York, 1972), 128.
6. Roch-Lecours, "La Glossolalie."
7. [The terminology and stylistics of Certeau's text present special challenges to the translator. Certeau often writes very allusively, and he borrows from very diverse traditions. In this work there is constant implicit and explicit reference not only to the vocabularies of linguistics, psychoanalysis, and philosophy but also to several heterogeneous historical and theological vocabularies. Thus, for example, the phrase *that which speaks* at once refers to a mystical and to a Lacanian vocabulary, the term *Voix inspiratrice* at once refers to mysticism and to the humanist conception of the Muse. Certeau playfully mixes and draws double meanings from his metaphors so that, for example, the *théâtre* alluded to periodically in the article should be understood as both a *playhouse* and a military *theater of operation*. One of the most difficult aspects of rendering this particular work in English is capturing (or releasing) the nuances of the many terms that Certeau employs in relation to speech, particularly, *dire*, *le dire*, *parler*, *le parler*, *un parler*, *la parole*, *la Parole*, *le discours*, *la langue*, *le langage*, *l'énoncé*, and *l'énonciation*. The equivalences between these terms and their English counterparts are only partial. The difference between the verbs *dire* and *parler*, for example, is captured roughly by the distinction between the verbs *to say* and *to speak* in English, that is, by the distinction between linguistic expression and linguistic articulation. (Hence, for example, the difference between, "It is difficult to say," and "It is difficult to speak.") The distinction is expressed particularly well in the phrase noted here that is translated as "It speaks for the sake of speaking," which in French reads *"Il parle pour ne rien dire,"* that is, literally, "It speaks to say nothing." In some instances, *dire* is translated as *to tell* (which focuses on the message), as it is here when the relationship to *fable* is emphasized. Again, consistent with the general distinction, *un parler* is translated as *a talking* or *a way to talk* that is closer to articulation than to expression, and that also implies the reciprocity of conversation. The translation of the terms *le dire*, *le parler*, and *la parole* presents additional difficulties. In many instances, English speakers would normally use *speech* to translate all three. In this translation, the English term *speech* is usually equivalent to the French *le dire*. In a few instances, however, when what is at issue is a *faculty* or a *capacity* rather than a specific *act*, the best English equivalent of any of these terms is simply *speech*. In cases in which distinctions among the French terms were important to mark, I have used *saying* (*le dire*), *speaking* (*le parler*), and *the spoken word* (*la parole*) (which preserves the theological resonance of *la Parole*, *the Word*). I have been as consistent as possible in rendering this terminology in English. At the same time, it is important to recognize that Certeau's argument tends both to develop the nuances among these terms and to destabilize them, and that certain paradoxes and ambiguities are a necessary effect of the work. *Trans.*]
8. [*Chevaucher*, "to ride," "to mount," or "to straddle," evokes the image of the voodoo horse, possession overtaking the possessed. It may also suggest the notion of straddling, as when typographic lines overlap one another. *Trans.*]
9. [Certeau employs the image of the tattoo upon language repeatedly. See, for example, Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, trans. Steven Rendall (Berkeley, 1984), 139–41; see also, Certeau, *Mystic Fable*, 119, 150; and Michel de Certeau, "Lacan: an Ethics of Speech," trans. Marie-Rose Logan, in *Heterologies*, 50. *Trans.*]
10. Cited in William J. Samarin, "Requirements for Research on Glossolalia," (Urbino, Italy, 1978), photocopy, 14.

11. [*La fiction de langue est la scène où se produit une fiction de dire*. Throughout this essay, Certeau plays on the senses of *fiction*, notably in this paragraph where he uses it to mean "fiction," "simulation," and "simulator" (as in "simulations of lunar landing"). On Certeau's use of the term *fiction* see also, *Mystic Fable*, 188–90. *Trans.*]
12. [This dichotomy (*l'énonciation/l'énoncé*) distinguishes between the linguistic form of an utterance and what it states or expresses. The terms are translated here as "enunciation" and "statement." Or, for *énoncer*, "to express." See ibid., 161. *Trans.*]
13. [The title "Two Species" evokes the two species of transubstantiation in relation to the two species of glossolalic transformation formulated here. *Trans.*]
14. [*Il faut que ça parle. Ça* evokes both mystical and psychoanalytic registers. John of the Cross refers to a "that" which speaks. (See note 16.) *Ça* is also the French psychoanalytic term equivalent to *id* in English translations of Freud. *Trans.*]
15. [*L'Oralité, c'est l'or. Auralité*. Here, Certeau puns doubly: *l'or* in French means "the gold." However, in this instance, getting the sense of the puns (which also mime the transit from mouth to ear) is no more important than hearing the glossolalic fragments in it. *Trans.*]
16. John of the Cross, *Ascent of Mount Carmel*, ed. and trans. E. Allison Peers (Garden City, N.Y., 1958), prologue. St. John of the Cross' definition of the Holy Spirit as "the one who speaks," far from being exceptional, is found throughout a "spiritual" tradition and connects with a still larger tradition that makes of the voice the very act of the *spirit* (good or bad).
17. On the utopic "neutral," cf. Louis Marin, *Utopics: Spatial Play*, trans. Robert A. Vollrath (Atlantic Highlands, N.J., 1994 [1973]), chap. 1.
18. [All of the poets mentioned here are associated with traditions of Dada and of nonsense poetry. Christian Morgenstern (1871–1914) and Hugo Ball (1886–1927) were both important in Germany in the period before the first world war. Ball was instrumental in the original Dada movement and in the foundation of the Café Voltaire in 1916. The Canadian poets Raoul Duguay (1939–) and Claude Gauvreau (1925–71) are of a later generation. Duguay and his Infonie group were interested especially in the relationship between poetry and theories of sound. Eventually associated with the Barre du Jour writers in the 1960s, Gauvreau's work from the 1940s on shows important influences of surrealism. *Trans.*]
19. Cited in Hans Rust, *Das Zungenreden: Eine Studie zur kritischen Religionpsychologie* (Munich, 1924). This poem plays at times on the proper names used in spiritual lieder: thus *Schua ea* or, in the second stanza, not cited here, *Ea tschu*, for *lesu* or *levšuah*. On these poetic phenomena, see also Leo Navratil, *Schizophrenie und Sprache: Zur Psychologie der Dichtung* (Munich, 1966), 57 ff., 124–58.
20. [*Insensé* means mad or meaningless. *Trans.*]
21. [*Il isole le dire de tout dire. Trans.*]
22. [Certeau evokes the musical sense of the term *attack*; see note 4. *Trans.*]
23. Acts 2, 5, 11. Cf. *Dictionnaire de spiritualité ascetique et mystique, doctrine et histoire*, vol. 9 (Paris, 1976), s.v. "langues (don des)." [The distinction between *vouloir dire* and *vouloir dire quelque chose* is emblematic of the sort of wordplay at work in this essay. *Vouloir dire* already signifies both "to want to say" and "to mean," and these senses are always interlaced since *dire* or "to say" (in contrast to *parler*, "to speak") already privileges the expression of meaning over and above the physical act of speaking. But this entire essay is devoted to the component of meaning that is wanting. The attempt to add "something" (*quelque chose*) to *vouloir dire* is an attempt to transform it from and intransitive to a transitive verb, to make it "mean something" in particular rather than

openly to "mean" or to "want" (to say). Furthermore, this movement would deemphasize the modal aspect of the phrase, the wanting, reanchoring saying to language. But, as Certeau argues, it is the literalization of the "want to say" in an act that is the origin of all mystic speech. See Certeau, *Mystic Fable*, 168–76. *Trans.*]

24. Michel de Certeau, "Quotations of Voices," in *Practice of Everyday Life*. [This is a major theme in Certeau's oeuvre, the production of writing / knowledge on the site of speech/ fable. "To define the position of the other (primitive, religious, made, childlike, or popular) as a 'fable' is not merely to identify it with 'what speaks' (*fari*), but with a speech that 'does not know' what it says. . . . The 'fable' is . . . a world full of meaning, but what it says 'implicitly' becomes 'explicit' only through scholarly exegesis. By this trick, research accords itself in advance, through its very object, a certain necessity and a location"; ibid., 159–62. See also, Michel de Certeau, "Ethno-Graphy: Speech, or the Space of the Other: Jean de Léry," in *The Writing of History*, trans. Tom Conley (New York, 1988), 209–43. *Trans.*]
25. Acts 12, 10, 19 (the case of "speaking in other tongues"), and St. Paul, 1 Cor. 14 (which envisages more a tongue spoken "with the spirit," "manifestation of the Holy Spirit," thus inspired but devoid of intelligible meaning though controllable by the speakers.) Cf. Gerhard Kittel, ed., *Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament* (Stuttgart, 1933–1979), vol. 1, s.v. "glossa, die Glossolalie," and vol. 10, bk. 2 (recent bibliography). [The entry for *glossa* is translated in Gerhard Kittel, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, ed. and trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley, vol. 1 (Grand Rapids, 1964), s.v. "glossa."]
26. *Psychoanalysis and Faith: The Letters of Sigmund Freud and Oskar Pfister*, ed. Heinrich Meng and Ernst L. Freud, trans. Eric Mosbacher (New York, 1963); Cf. Sigmund Freud—Oskar Pfister: *Briefe, 1909–1939* (Frankfurt am Main, 1963).
27. Oskar Pfister, *Die psychologische Enträtselung der religiösen Glossolalie und der automatischen Kryptographie* (Leipzig, 1912); Oskar Pfister, *Die psychoanalytische Methode* (Leipzig, 1913), which contains a chapter on "religious glossolalia" (Cf. Oskar Pfister, *The Psychoanalytic Method*, trans. Charles Rockwell Payne (New York, 1917), 230–40). Freud to Pfister, 27 September 1910, 18 June 1911, 14 December 1911, etc., *Psychoanalysis and Faith*.
28. [Certeau alludes to Matt. 7.7–9 and perhaps also to Augustine's *Confessions* 7.12. *Trans.*]
29. ["Secret speech" is from Payne's translation of Pfister, *Psychoanalytic Method*, 235. Certeau uses "*discours*." *Trans.*]
30. Freud to Pfister, 18 June 1911, *Psychoanalysis and Faith*. [The full passage from Freud's letter reads, "My critical eye finds your interpretation of the vision of the devil {in a case discussed in Pfister's book on glossolalia} too simple, too facile. The devil's wearing the innocent young girl's nose on his face as the 'visible sign of his slander' is too tamely expressed and too simply explained. Let us make a more plausible assumption, one which fits in better with our knowledge, and say that such a vision is not a simple wish-picture but the product of several conflicting stimuli with one of them predominating. In that case the devil would be a mixed formation, really standing also for the girl, and his nakedness is even better explained as a means of seduction than as a sign of her humiliation. Without this there is no explanation of why the devil should have got the girl's certainly very pretty little nose as recompense for his slanderous deed. The pious are not usually as generous as that in their ravings," 52. *Trans.*]
31. "I think that you will quickly be able to unveil (*entlarven*) the work of the complexes in these so-called involuntary performances," Freud to Pfister, 27 September 1910, *Psychoanalysis and Faith*, 44. [*Entendre* carries the sense of "hearing" as well here. *Trans.*]
32. Freud to Pfister, 18 June 1911, *Psychoanalysis and Faith*, 52. [On the relationship be-

tween psychoanalysis and fiction, see also, Michel de Certeau, "The Freudian Novel," in *Heterologies*, 17–34, and Michel de Certeau, "Freudian Writing," in *Writing of History*, 285–354. *Trans.*]

33. Pfister, *Psychoanalytic Method*, 238.
34. [See discussion of "all the same" on page 34. *Trans.*]
35. [In a related passage in *Mystic Fable*, 156, Certeau refers to Emmanuel Levinas's conception of "saying" in his *Otherwise than Being: or, Beyond Essence*, trans. Alphonso Lingis (The Hague, 1981), 23–59. *Trans.*]
36. [In some instances, *tromperie* is used in this text as a virtual synonym for *semblant* or for *simulacre*. In other cases, it implies something more active, along the lines of dissimulation or trickery. *Trans.*]
37. [On the relationships among *saying*, *speaking*, and *talking* see note 7. *Trans.*]
38. Théodore Flournoy, *Des Indes à la planète Mars: Etude sur un cas de somnambulisme avec glossolalie*, 3rd ed. (Paris, 1900). A modern edition of *Des Indes* with critical introductions by Marina Yaguello and by Mireille Cifali appeared at Paris in 1983; in English: Théodore Flournoy, *From India to the Planet Mars: A Case of Multiple Personality with Imaginary Languages*, trans. Daniel B. Vermilye, ed. and introduced by Sonu Shamdasani (Princeton, 1994). On the same case, Flournoy also published, "Nouvelles observations sur un cas de somnambulisme avec glossolalie," in *Archives de psychologie de la Suisse romande* (December 1901): 102–255 (consecrated mainly to the "Ultra-Martian signs" or "hieroglyphs" of Mlle. Smith), and a linguist, Victor Henry, published *Le Langage martien* (Paris, 1901). Cf. Tzvetan Todorov, "Saussure's Semiotics," in *Theories of the Symbol*, trans. Catherine Porter (Ithaca, 1982), 255–70.
39. This is rather a characteristic trait of glossolalic speech.
40. Saussure, cited in Flournoy, *From India*, 195–96, 201–2.
41. Saussure, cited in Flournoy, *From India*, 315–17.
42. Henry, *Langage martien*, 23, and Todorov, *Theories of the Symbol*, 258–59.
43. Cf. Madeleine Masure, *Le Parler en langues* (Nice, 1974).
44. *La Vita Nuova of Dante Alighieri*, trans. Mark Musa (New Brunswick, N.J., 1957), 30–31. Modified somewhat.
45. Cf. Georges Dumézil, *Idées romaines* (Paris, 1969), 61–78; and Certeau, *Practice of Everyday Life*, 123–26.
46. [*Répéter* means not only to repeat but also to rehearse. Beginning here, Certeau constructs a network of references—theater, stage, scene, performance, set, backstage, exit, parterre—many of them punning, some of them irreducibly: *sortie* and *théâtre* double as military metaphors, *parterre* as garden, and so forth. *Trans.*]
47. [The French term *inspiratrice* means "inspiring," but it also implies the specific influence of the Muse upon the soul of the poet. *Trans.*]
48. [Certeau develops this notion of the spatial distribution of language in several places. See especially, Certeau, *Mystic Fable*, 185–89, on the "modal checkerboard." A different version of the checkerboard image is suggested in Certeau, "Discourse Disturbed: The Sorcerer's Speech," in *Writing of History*, 258–61. *Trans.*]
49. Roman Jakobson, *Selected Writings* (La Haye, France, 1966), 4:637–44. The text concerning glossolalia was translated into French by Nicolas Ruwet and appeared in *Tel quel* 26 (1966): 3–9.
50. [The term *relever* (to lift back up) also means to point out, to mark up, to relay, and to relieve (as well as to season). Jacques Derrida plays on these multiple meanings in using the term to translate Hegel's "untranslatable" term, *aufheben*. See Jacques Derrida, "Différance," in *Margins of Philosophy*, trans. Alan Bass (Chicago, 1982), 1–28. *Trans.*]

51. This expression is from Elizabeth Sewel, cited by Jakobson, *Selected Writings*, 642.
52. Cf. Jean-Louis Chrétien, "Le Langage des anges selon la scolastique," *Critique* 387–88 (August–September 1979): 674–89.
53. Augustine *Enarrationes in psalmos* 32.8 (Corpus Christianorum. Series Latina 38.254). Cf. *Dictionnaire de spiritualité*, s.v. "langues" (trans. modified).
54. [See Certeau, *Mystic Fable*, 173–76: "The subject *is forgetfulness* of what language articulates. From the start, the 'I' has the formal structure of ecstasy." *Trans.*]
55. Francis Ponge, *La Promenade dans nos serres* (Paris, 1967). [*Voie* or "way" echoes here with *voix* or "voice." *Parterre de voyelles colorées* implies a transition from the image of the theater to the image of the garden or forest. Throughout the essay, Certeau poses these sorts of material undecidabilities, which are also a subject of the Ponge poem to which a quotation elliptically alludes. *Trans.*]